



Joe Sanfelippo



Milwaukee County Supervisor - 17th District

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December 2010

Committee Assignments:

Parks, Energy and Environment (Vice-Chair) • Judiciary, Safety and General Services • Personnel

Dear Friends and Constituents,

Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. We have all heard that phrase sung hundreds of times each December. For some, the best part of Christmas is getting gifts, while for others it's giving them. Carrying on traditions with large gatherings of family and friends are how some celebrate while others prefer smaller, less formal affairs. I enjoy watching all the old classic Christmas movies such as *The Bells of St. Mary's*, *Going My Way*, and *the Bishop's Wife*. Perhaps the best thing about Christmas, however, is the spirit.

Christmas is the one time each year when we go out of our way to think of others. Sending cards and gifts to loved ones, donating loose change in a red kettle, holding a door open for someone, or just giving a friendly smile and a greeting to a perfect stranger all are ways that we celebrate the season each December. While Christmas is a celebration by Christians of the birth of Jesus Christ, here in America it has grown into a holiday that is celebrated by everyone because the giving spirit of Christmas closely mirrors the generosity of the American people. Whether you will be celebrating Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa or another holiday, have a great time.

I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and many continued blessings throughout the New Year.



Lane Painting in Greendale

Recently, I was able to work with our Department of Public Works to get the far right hand lanes on S. 76th Street between W. Grange Ave and the southern Village limits marked as "no through traffic" lanes.

The speed of the cars traveling down this stretch of road and the closeness of the sidewalk to the roadway in some spots made this area a tragedy waiting to happen. I would like to thank the area residents and the Village Manager for bringing this problem to my attention. And I especially want to thank our DPW Director, Mr. Jack Takerian, for his critical assistance in getting this done.

2011 County Budget

Last month, the County Board passed the budget for 2011. The \$1.3 billion budget includes a property tax levy of \$269 million, which is \$6.2 million or 2.4% more than 2010. I was disappointed that, despite the fact that we are experiencing the worst recession in the history of our country, a time when families are forced to cut back on spending, tens of thousands of our citizens are unemployed and those living on fixed incomes are squeezed harder than ever, we could not adopt a budget that did not increase spending. I voted against this increase. During times such as this, government should be doing what it can to ease your burden rather than adding to it.

As in 2010, the 2011 budget calls for some wage and benefit savings from county employees. Non-represented employees will pay more for their health insurance and, by the end of the year, will contribute 4% of their salary toward the cost of their pension benefit. These are important **first steps** in getting the county's labor costs in control and more aligned with the standards in the private sector. Employees represented by labor unions who do not agree to take the same modest wage and benefit reforms will be subjected to 26 furlough days and, in some cases, layoffs during 2011. Making labor costs more affordable is the best way for us to protect county jobs and continue to provide the programs and services our citizens expect and deserve. It is also a critical step in solving the county's long-term structural deficit and returning us to financial solvency.

Two amendments to the budget that I authored this year were both rejected. The first would have consolidated two separate maintenance facilities into one location on the County Grounds. The facility currently being used by the Parks Department would have been put up for sale with the proceeds going towards much needed repairs in some of our parks.

Besides generating money for parks repairs, the consolidation would have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars every year by running one facility for maintenance crews rather than two separate locations. The Parks Department has too many areas of need for us to waste money running a facility we don't really need. I will continue to push this idea forward through the regular committee process.

The second amendment I authored had to do with transit. In his proposed budget, the County Executive recommended cutting back on hours of operation by stopping bus service at midnight rather than 2 am and starting service at 4:30 am rather than 4:00 am.

Since bus transportation is vital to many people getting to and from work, I was afraid that terminating service two hours early would pose a problem for second shift and third shift workers. Recognizing the need to work within a tight budget, I authored an amendment that would have instituted a transfer fee for all passengers. By paying a .25 cent fee for a transfer, we could have restored the service on virtually all routes back to 2 am without raising property taxes or cutting other services.

While the Board did restore the service they did so by eliminating three freeway flyer routes and taking \$1.2 million dollars of one-time grant money meant for capital repairs and using it to plug the hole in the operating cost. Using one-time funding to pay for ongoing operating costs is a fundamentally flawed approach and a very bad idea since it merely kicks the problem down the road for a year. My idea was a much more responsible plan as it would have provided a permanent funding source that did not involve cutting freeway flyer routes.



Blueprint for Restoring Financial Solvency in Milwaukee County Government

You may recall last August I released my [Blueprint for Restoring Financial Solvency in Milwaukee County Government](#) in which I wrote about Milwaukee County's structural deficit and the financial problems it is causing. I also made several recommendations on actions that could be taken toward solving the long-term structural deficit and restoring the county back to a sound financial footing. Unfortunately, to date my Blueprint has gone largely ignored.

Now that we are finished with the November elections and the hectic budget time at the County Board has passed, I will be turning my efforts toward advancing some of the ideas contained in my blueprint as well as others I have come up with.

2011, in my estimation, is going to be a critical year. We can either take the difficult yet crucial steps that will be required to restore Milwaukee County back to financial solvency or we are going to return to old tax, spend and push the problems off down the road ways of the past.

I do not think for one minute that I have all the answers to all the problems, but I will not sit on my hands and do nothing. Each idea I put forward will be done so in a deliberate and thoughtful manner to create a discussion amongst the Board and bring resolution to our financial problems. Anything less and we will not be doing our jobs.

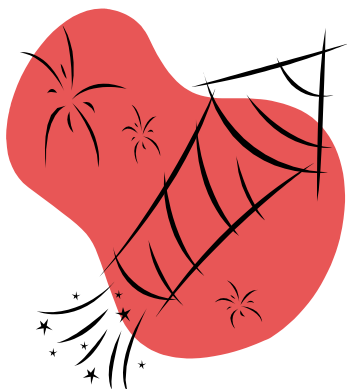
I will keep you informed each month through my ENEWS letters and, as always, I welcome your comments and ideas.

New Year's Eve Countdown at Red Arrow Park

Come celebrate the New Year with family and friends at Red Arrow Park on New Year's Eve with a little "Slice of Ice."

Opening Thursday, December 9, 2010
weather permitting
New Year's Eve
11:00am to 2:00am

Red Arrow Park
920 North Water, Milwaukee



Free Day at the Milwaukee County Zoo

For Milwaukee County Residents with I.D.

Saturday, December 4, 2010

9:30am-4:30pm

10001 West Bluemound Road, Milwaukee

***Christmas Day the Zoo is open from 9:30am-2:30pm
with free admission for Milwaukee County Residents***